

HORWICH TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the Council Chamber, Public Hall, Lee Lane, Horwich on Monday 11 October 2021 commencing at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors: M. Brady (in the Chair) I. Aldcroft, M. Baines, J. Bostocksmith, S. Chadwick, S. Denton, D. Grant, S. Rock, C. Rotheram, G. Stone, P. Wright.
C. Morris, Deputy Town Clerk.

CHAIR TO OUTLINE FIRE SAFETY EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

FG 7328 Councillor Brady outlined the procedure from the information provided.

TO SUBMIT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ACCEPT THE REASONS:

FG 7329 Apologies were accepted from Councillor Coward, Councillor Burke and Councillor Williamson.

TO REMIND MEMBERS TO MAKE A DECLARATION CONCERNING ANY MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED DURING THE MEETING OF WHICH THEY HAVE AN INTEREST:

FG 7330 Councillor Chadwick declared an interest on agenda item 7 since they resided on Brownlow Road.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT MAY PUT QUESTIONS OR MAKE OBSERVATIONS REGARDING MATTERS IN RELATION TO WHICH THE TOWN COUNCIL HAS POWERS OR DUTIES OR WHICH AFFECT THE PARISH. MAXIMUM PERIOD 15 MINUTES:

FG 7331 None.

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2021:

FG 7332 Resolved to approve the minutes and recommendations of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 13 September 2021.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNCILLOR BURKE ON GREEN LANE PLAYING FIELDS AND APPROVE PROPOSALS FOR THE COSTS OF INSTALLATION OF FENCING UP TO A MAXIMUM OF £25,000 AND ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR DROPPED KERBING UP TO A MAXIMUM OF £1,500:

FG 7333 Councillor Brady spoke on behalf of Councillor Burke and updated members on a report regarding the fence.

Three different companies had provided quotes for fencing in 2019. The cost was then included within the Town Council budget. In 2020, Bolton Council had advised to look into match funding as a way of raising additional costs but sadly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this possibility is no longer viable.

Councillor Rotheram joined the meeting.

Councillor Burke had obtained 3 quotes for twin style 868 mesh fencing since its sturdy and durable. The specifications given by Malcolm Russell from Bolton Council were:

225 metres of 1.8 metres high twin mesh 868 style fencing

The quotes included:

- 2 x four metre gates (one on each level of the fields) to allow vehicular access for maintenance and emergencies.
- 3 x pedestrian 'kissing gates' along the fence line
- Hard surface installation at the vehicular gates to allow maintenance vehicles to rest on whilst the gates are locked/unlocked (gateway plastic eco surfaces)
- Dropped kerbs to be installed on the road side of the vehicular gates / top level of the fields

It was noted that 1 out of the 3 quotes presented had not countered in the cost for the hard surface installation and should be discounted from consideration since the quote amount was already in excess of £23,493.

A member queried whether there would be somebody who would be able to manage the project since it was a substantial amount of money being spent. Councillor Brady ensured that a Clerk of works would be appointed from Bolton Council who would oversee the project, ensure a certificate of completion of works is issued and quality checked.

The prices of the quotes were up to day but were liable to change since the cost of steel has continuing to increase on a weekly basis. Members agreed the quicker the project went ahead the better the price of the fencing that would be locked in since £30,000 had been reserved in the budget. It was also confirmed that the access gates would be lockable ones and with signage to denote access required for maintenance vehicles at all times.

Councillor Grant asked where the Town Council was up to with the potential leasing of the playing field. Councillor Brady informed members that there were still ongoing talks with Malcolm Russell on possibilities of uses for the field which had been included as part of a feasibility study. Horwich had secured £100k from Bolton Council but could also consider Section 106 monies and apply for match funding in order to carry out necessary works and maintenance once the land had been leased from Bolton Council.

Resolved to receive a report from Councillor Burke on Green Lane playing fields and recommend approval of the proposals for the costs of installation of fencing up to maximum of £25,000 and additional costs for dropped kerbing up to a maximum of £1,500.

TO APPROVE THE COST OF ADDITIONAL WINTER GRITTING IN HORWICH (PART BROWNLOW ROAD AND NEW CHAPEL LANE) BY BOLTON COUNCIL FOR A THREE-MONTH PERIOD (1 DECEMBER 2021 – 28 FEBRUARY 2022) AT £12,000

FG 7334 Councillor Chadwick said it was fantastic and was required but queried why Horwich Town Council was financially contributing towards the additional winter gritting and covering the gap from Bolton Council.

Councillor Brady informed members that Bolton Council had received a report from the PDG which needed to be accepted by Full Council which has reviewed which roads take precedent on being gritted. It was to go off the gradient and

the use of the road so potentially the roads which are currently covered by Horwich Town Council could be included within the route.

Resolved to recommend approval of the cost of additional winter gritting in Horwich (part Brownlow Road and New Chapel Lane) by Bolton Council for a three-month period (1 December 2021 – 28 February 2022) at £12,000.

TO APPROVE THE COST OF THE ASSEMBLY AND DISASSEMBLY OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTING IN HORWICH CENTRE FOR 2021 AT £6,800 AND TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR 2022:

FG 7335 Members had previously mentioned looking into an alternative company to manage the Christmas lights. It was stated that additional costs could be included in the next budget to plan something different, for example a light display.

Councillor Rock queried why the lights couldn't be permanently assembled in the Town Centre and just have them tested as this could potentially decrease the additional costs.

Councillor Rotheram had contacted a company in St Helen's who specifically assemble Christmas lights for councils all over the country. They also store and maintain the Christmas lights when they are not in use. The electrical company only require knowing where the lights are switched on in order to carry out the works.

Councillor Denton enquired as to whether the wooden switch would be replaced for when the countdown to the lights is done.

Councillor Stone stated about benchmarking with Horwich Town Council looking at other similar size councils such as Skipton for ideas and cost referencing going forward.

There had been an informal discussion with Bolton Council in regards to changing the contractor. Councillor Rotheram said he would contact Joe Fox at Bolton Council Highways and Engineering regarding the changing of contractors as long as they were covered by indemnity insurance and Bolton Council were happy for the Town Council to use an alternative contractor.

Resolved to approve the cost of the assembly and disassembly of Christmas lighting in Horwich Centre for 2021 at £6,800 and to consider alternative options for 2022.

TO APPROVE ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SCHEDULE ATTACHED:

FG 7336 Resolved to approve the accounts for payment amounting to £ 942.00

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| Leach Briely Accountants | £ 222.00 |
| (Completion of payroll, auto enrolment compliance services & real time initiative compliance services 1 Jun – 31 Aug 2021) | |

PKF Littlejohn LLP
 (Completion of external audit up to 31
 March 2021)

£ 720.00

TOWN CLERKS REPORT (EMAILED TO MEMBERS) – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

- FG 7337
- a. Churches Together in Horwich: 'Under the Pike' October edition.
 - b. Bolton Station Community Partnership: information on showing of wartime and railway themed film as part of Bolton Film Festival on 13 October at 7.00pm at Platform 5 gallery, Bolton Station.
 - c. Mrs D. McGeehan: letter of thanks for Civic Medal Award
 - d. Summary of Town Councillors' casework.

The Town Clerk's report was noted.

REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES – FOR INFORMATION ONLY:

FG 7338 a. **Town Mayor of Horwich**

Councillor Denton informed members that she had not been at the last meeting to give an update so was covering the September period. The Mayor's Cadet had been successfully selected after interviewing 3 candidates for the role. The Mayor's Cadet will be having a ceremony after they had been inaugurated. The Cadet would attend event's which the Mayor sees fit. It was hoped that this would have occurred prior to Remembrance Sunday as this seemed like the only fitting event for the Mayor's Cadet to attend. The Mayor attended the Blackrod Civic Sunday which was very nice as got to meet other Mayors. Councillor Denton had also attended the Battle of Britain event. The Mayor enjoyed handing the Civic award to Colin Myers despite there being a last-minute venue change and also opened the whiskey festival at the Wayoh Brewery which the owner offered to host a Mayoral Charity event at the venue early next year. On 27th September, the Mayor had attended the home of Delia McGeehan to also award her with the Civic medal. On Monday 11th October, Councillor Denton opened up the KD's over 50's men's club and wished them their success. She stated it was a great group and that there were now two over 50's club's which residents could attend at the Horwich Community Centre.

The Deputy Mayor was happy to have been able to open up the Rotary's Beer Festival in September and hopes to be in attendance again.

b. **Horwich Ward Councillors**

Councillor Grant – There was not much to report. Efforts had been concentrated around Blackrod. The biggest thing was ensuring that Officers were fully appraised of the Neighbourhood Plan and just shows the importance of it, with the number of hours and hard work from members that went into it. Some of the conditions within the Plan were included on a recent planning application.

Councillor Wright – Been a quiet month focusing on casework. There has been tyres which have been dumped under the bridge of Chorley New Road

in Station Park. The police had been contacted and also Bolton Council. The offender has since been caught using CCTV from the lockup.

Councillor Brady – The Area Forum will be meeting in a few weeks to discuss expenditure of the remaining funds. Councillor Brady is pushing for a fence to be placed at Ridgmont to stop vehicles going on. There is a cycleway from Doffcocker to Bolton in which there is a consultation for people to comment. Telford Street still seems to have opposition to the Pump Park and has continued to pursue it. Councillor Brady has been informed to speak with the Outreach Workers from Children Services and conduct some research around Horwich.

Bolton Council have signed up to the Clean Air Plan. As Horwich lies within the clean air zone, there will be cameras being installed in March 2022. At the current time it will only be commercial vehicles older than 2014. The ANPR cameras will be on located at the entrances to Horwich.

Councillor Brady informed members that the new Chief Constable of Greater Manchester attended a meeting of Bolton Council. They had previously been at South Yorkshire which was in Special measures until recently and was hoping to turn the current status of Greater Manchester Police around.

c. **Representatives on Outside Bodies**

None

TO APPROVE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE AS 8 NOVEMBER 2021:

FG 7339 Resolved to approve the date of the next meeting as 8 November 2021. The meeting closed at 8.10pm.

Chair.....

Date.....